United Nations E/2016/NGO/67

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
24 May 2016

Original: English

2016 session
24 July 2015-27 July 2016
Agenda item 5
High-level segment

Statement submitted by Sulabh International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

16-08759 (E) 030616

Please recycle

Statement

"Implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Moving from commitments to results"

The theme for the 2016 ECOSOC High Level Segment for NGOs is implementing the post 2015 development agenda moving from commitments to results. The high level segments for NGOs will include the high level political forum on sustainable development; the high level policy dialogue; the biennial Development Cooperation Forum; and a thematic discussion on "Infrastructure for sustainable development for all" with special emphasis on "Ensuring that no one is left behind".

Sulabh International Social Service Organisation India has General Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The Organisation was founded in 1970 with a purpose of providing toilets for all and for rescuing the 'untouchables' from cleaning bucket toilets, and stopping open defecating by providing toilets to households in rural and urban areas, schools, in slum areas and in public places like railways stations, bus stops, market areas and religious and tourist places.

In India in the 1970s no house in rural areas had a toilet. People went outside for defecation and women suffered the most. They had to go out before sunrise or after sunset because after dark sometimes the snakes used to bite them and there were cases of animal attacks and even rapes were committed. No school had a toilet. Therefore girls were discouraged from going to school. Children used to die because of diarrhoea and dehydration. In urban areas 85 percent of houses had bucket toilets and they used to be cleaned by the untouchables. For that they were segregated from the rest of society and most of the time they used to feel insulted and humiliated. Public places had no public toilets and therefore foreigners used to hesitate to go to India.

To solve the above problems the Founder of the organisation Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak, invented and innovated the decentralized treatment of human waste technology where human excreta is converted into fertilizer on site, which does not require manual handling of human excreta. This technology is appropriate and affordable, indigenous and culturally acceptable and this has made a difference in the sanitation scenario of India. This technology on the one hand ends the practice of manual cleaning of night soil by untouchables and on the other it helps to stop open defecation. Now women can go to the toilet with safety and dignity. Girls go to school and the practice of manual cleaning of night soil has been stopped. Sulabh has built 1.5 million household toilets in both urban and rural areas and the government of India has constructed 54 million household toilets based on the Sulabh technology. Countries like China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, South Africa etc. have adopted this technology and more countries are in offering.

This technology has been declared globally cost effective by the UN Habitat first in Istanbul (Turkey) 1996, and in Dubai 2000. BBC in its Horizon programme has featured Sulabh technology as one of the five unique inventions in the world.

Dr. Pathak also gave the concept of maintenance of public pay and use toilets in 1974. Initially it was opposed, joked and was viewed sceptically by the people. In 1974 on the first day of August, 500 people came to use the toilet and now it has

been accepted throughout the country. So far, Sulabh has built 8500 and these toilets which are being used by 15 million people on a daily basis. Sulabh has also built 5 public toilets with biogas plants in Kabul and Afghanistan and since 2007 all toilets are functioning very well even when the temperature went down to — 300C in 2007. Other companies and NGOs have also constructed public toilets and are maintaining them on a similar pattern. Biogas plants have been linked also with 200 public toilets including in Kabul and biogas is being used for burning lamps, cooking food and warming bodies during winter seasons. The biogas is converted into energy and has been supplied to light the street lamps. The water discharged from the public toilets based on biogas plant is also used as fertilizer and there is no chance of water pollution if discharged in the river bodies. It is recommended for non-sewerage areas. This technology can be used in housing colonies, high rise buildings, schools, colleges and hospitals, etc.

In respect of policy, the sanitation sector in India was injected with a new enthusiasm after mid 2014 when a new Government took charge under the stewardship of the Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Policy formulation in the field of sanitation acquired new meaning when in his very first address to the nation on Independence Day 2014, the Prime Minister made mention of the importance of sanitation and set the target of providing toilets to all unserved households of the country by October 2019 when the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi will be celebrated. He called for efforts by all, that is, Government at all levels from the Central to the lowest formation that is the Panchayat in India, civil society including NGOs, corporate bodies and even individuals. This was to be under the umbrella of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' in which there were no exclusions; in fact it is to cover localities, streets and even by-lanes. The whole nation was galvanised. The nation has become an Army with all and sundry keen to be a member of it, ranging from sincere workers, activists and business magnates, personalities from the film world, to writers, social workers, students, mothers and girls. Thus we have policy formulation at the highest level to provide toilets for all. In concrete terms, this means construction of nearly 120.3 million toilets by October 2019.

After the announcement from the Prime Minster to provide toilets for all by 2019, Sulabh has also been working with state governments and more than 50 corporate sectors to help achieve the target. The target for 2016 to 2019 is to build about 120 million toilets. This can be achieved by following the framework given below.

Target

To make India open defecation free by 2019 — In India, there are 675 districts, 6849 blocks, 0.251 million panchayats and 0.646 million villages. The target is construction of nearly 120 million toilets.

Requirement of funds

The funds required will be 3600 billion to build 120 million toilets in three years. (The cost of a toilet is Rs. 30,000/- inclusive of cost escalation in three years. Therefore there will be no requirement of extra funds over and above this during the envisaged three year period.)

Technology

The two pit pour flush compost toilet technology invented by Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak is affordable, eco-friendly, indigenous, culturally acceptable technology popularly known as Sulabh Shauchalaya (Sulabh toilet). It has been accepted and adopted by the Government of India as well as other countries like China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, South Africa etc.

Methodology

It will be a centrally sponsored scheme and the Central Government through its Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation will place funds with about 0.125 million rural banks in India. The total number of Panchayats are 0.251 million. So, one bank will cater to the needs of two nearby panchayats.

Financing pattern and procedure

Implementing agencies will be selected on the basis of their expertise, experience, infrastructure, financial turn over, management capabilities and any other condition the Government may decide upon. Selected agencies will choose one person from each panchayat, to be known as motivator 0.251 million. It means 0.251 million motivators will be selected throughout the country for implementation of the programme. Apart from motivation, education and communication, the motivator, with the help of two masons and four labourers, should be able to construct a minimum of 20 toilets each month and will subsequently follow-up the functioning of the toilet.

On the basis of construction of 20 toilets each month, 720 toilets will be constructed in 3 years. With 0.251 million panchayats, that will mean construction of more than 1.8 million (1,80,720,000) toilets in 3 years. Therefore, even if there is slippage in construction, attaining the target of 120 million toilets is possible. The motivator will motivate the beneficiary and after the latter agrees to have the toilet constructed in the house, the motivator will fill out a form authorizing the agency to receive money from the bank on behalf of the beneficiary. After receiving and reviewing the application, the bank will give a 50 percent advance to start construction. The bank will inspect the work and after satisfying itself that 80 percent of the work for the received amount has been completed, will then release another 45 percent as advance. The remaining 5 percent of the money will be released after satisfactory completion of the work.

Review

After completion of the work the progress review should be conducted jointly by the bank, the beneficiary, the implementing agency and the coordinating agency. The completion certificate will be submitted to the bank signed by the beneficiary and the executing agency and the bank will adjust the amount after inspection of the work is completed.

Funds from various sources

- Contribution from the beneficiaries
- Subsidy from the Government
- Bank loan
- CSR fund
- Donation from India, abroad, Industries and rich people.
- NRIs

By doing so, the target can be achieved and the country will be free from open defecation. We have requested the Prime Minister of India to instruct the concerned authorities to act accordingly as per our advice so that the target can be achieved.

From what has been stated above it is clear that Sulabh has made efforts to create infrastructure in sustainable development for all, ensuring that no one is left behind. The task of constructing 120.3 million toilets by October 2019, which will fulfil the aim of providing toilets for all, is immense but Sulabh is doing all it can and has joined the effort with the confidence that it will succeed.